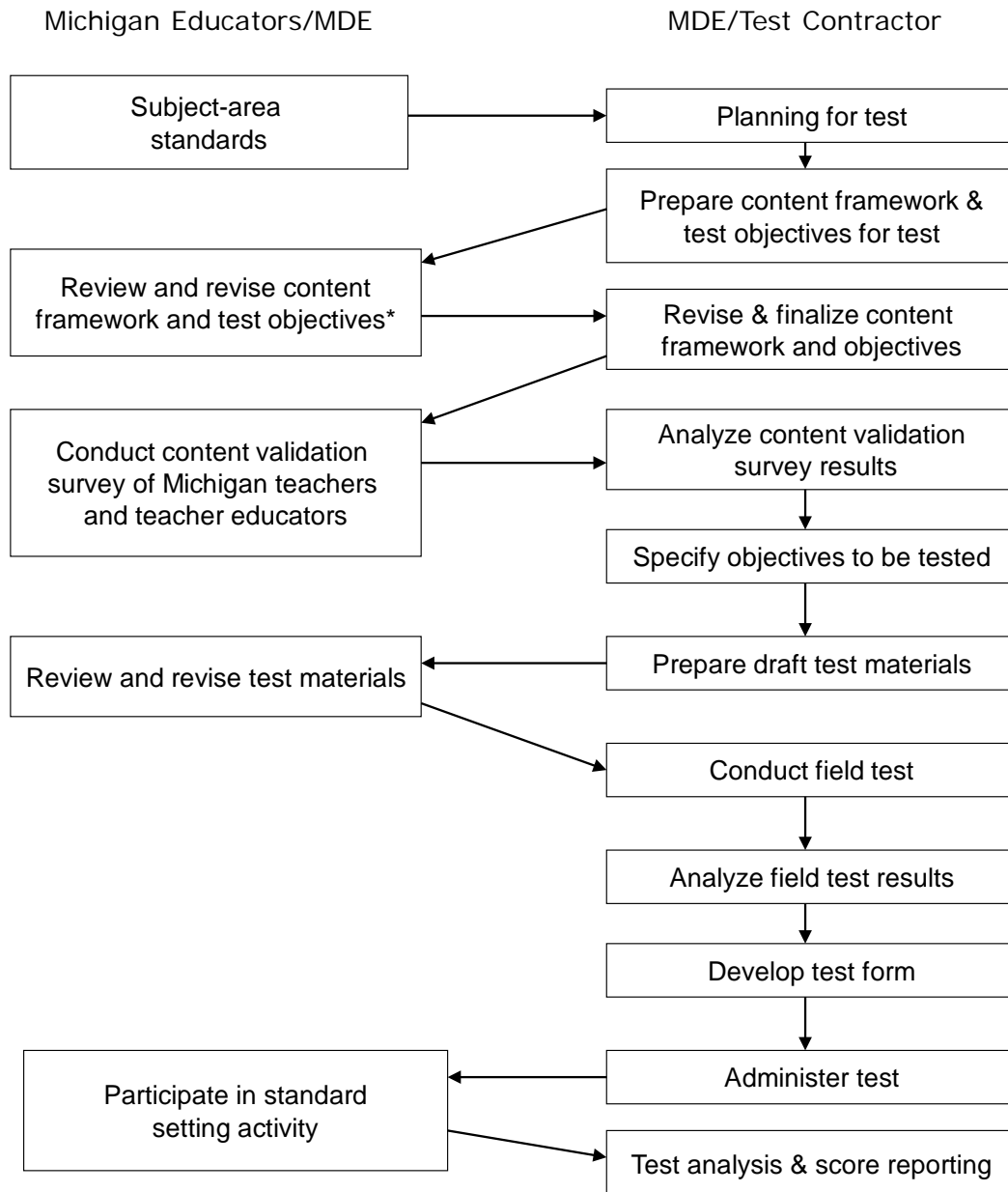


Michigan Test for Teacher Certification Program: Test Updating and Development Process



*MDE curriculum specialists, the Bias Review Committee, and the Content Advisory Committees review test materials. These committees are created through recommendations from representative professional organizations and school and college personnel. The Teacher Examination Advisory Committee and Standing Technical Advisory Council provide policy recommendations for the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

NOTE: The above flowchart is a schematic of the typical process of test customization, which is adapted to the needs of each test field.

Michigan Test for Teacher Certification Program: Test Updating and Development Process

The Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) results from a legislative mandate to assess the basic skills, i.e., professional readiness skills (in reading, mathematics, and writing) and content/subject area knowledge of candidates for teacher certification in Michigan. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the reading, mathematics, and writing before student teaching, and in the content/subject area field(s) for which they seek an endorsement before certification. The MTTC includes tests for more than 60 Michigan endorsements, administered in paper-based format at least four times annually at eleven or more sites across Michigan. The tests are administered in computer-based format across the state, the nation, and internationally at secure testing centers during the months paper-based tests are not available.

Program Design

The MTTC is designed to improve the quality of education in Michigan by helping to ensure the skills and knowledge of classroom teachers. Test materials are developed with the substantial participation of Michigan educators and are matched to Michigan standards, core curricula and other instructional materials used in the state. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) supervises the test development process as well as administration, scoring, and reporting test results. Two legislatively mandated committees of Michigan educators, the Teacher Examination Advisory Committee and the Standing Technical Advisory Council, formulate policy recommendations for the State Superintendent.

One main goal of the development process is the creation of a job-related assessment in each endorsement field, one that measures the content knowledge required for a practitioner in a Michigan classroom. The focus throughout is on assessment that reflects Michigan curricula and involves Michigan educators throughout the development process. The validity of the tests is rooted in extensive committee reviews of materials and in a content validation survey of teachers and teacher educators in each field. Moreover, the tests' structure of explicit content objectives allows for focused preparation by examinees and for diagnostic test results to be reported to candidates, teacher preparation institutions, and the state.

Development Process

In the development process for each assessment instrument, Michigan educators have the ability to modify and focus the draft materials for the Michigan tests as they deem appropriate (within the general parameters of the testing program), beginning with the review of the content outline and objectives. The process is scheduled over a period of about two years from the beginning of work on the outline and objectives to the availability of test forms for actual test administration. The test development process is as follows:

- A test contractor develops a draft content outline (framework) and a set of associated objectives, prepared with close attention to Michigan standards, core curricula and other materials that reflect classroom practice and teacher preparation in Michigan and in consultation with MDE curriculum specialists.
- A Bias Review Committee of Michigan teachers and teacher educators (appointed by the MDE) reviews the outline and objectives and makes suggestions related to potential bias in the materials.

- A field-specific Content Advisory Committee of Michigan teachers and teacher educators (nominated by subject area and educational organizations or professionals) reviews the outline and objectives. The Committee has the discretion to change the content of the outline and objectives as members agree appropriate to reflect the knowledge needed by a beginning teacher and within the general parameters of the testing program. The Committee also considers comments made by the Bias Review Committee.

- The contractor formats the revised outline and objectives as a content validation survey form. The survey form is sent to a random, representative sample of up to 200 Michigan classroom teachers and up to 100 teacher educators in each field to gather professional judgments on the importance of each objective for teaching in that field in Michigan.

- The MDE reviews the results of the surveys and identifies the final set of objectives eligible for testing based on established criteria for validity.

- The contractor develops draft test items matched to the validated objectives incorporating suggestions from Michigan educators about question formats, content, etc., and including references to Michigan texts and other curriculum materials.

- A Bias Review Committee meets to review the test questions and to provide recommendations for changing test items that may be potentially biased.

- A Content Advisory Committee meets to review every test question in the new bank. The Committee applies its professional judgment in making revisions to individual questions. The Committee reviews questions for objective match, accuracy, freedom from potential bias, and appropriate level of difficulty, among other characteristics. The Committee also considers comments from the Bias Review Committee in its recommendations.

- The contractor prepares the revised test questions for field testing and gathers field test data from populations of Michigan teacher candidates in each field.

- The contractor prepares test forms from the bank of approved Michigan questions for actual test administration.

- The Michigan Department of Education, with recommendations from the Standing Technical Advisory Council, establishes the standard (passing score) for each test with input from Michigan educators.